01635

1983/11/14

Roswell L. Gilpatric Oral History

OSD Historian's Office

11/14/83

Re: RSM/Military Relations

pp. 38-39

RLG: "McNamara was a very incisive, no-nonsense kind of Defense Secretary. He made decisions very easily and very quickly. It discomfited the Chiefs or other service personnel, who came in with an elaborate visual presentation, to have him cut through and get to the questions that were important before they had gone through their whole set of motions. Also, at the end of a session over some matter of Navy procurement or of Air Force development, he would write out his decision in long hand on a yellow pad, and then have his secretary duplicate it and hand it to the men. The military were used to having a longer process, more deliberation, and usually having the matter referred by the Secretary of Defense to some subordinate; not so with McNamara. And, of course, he did clash with LeMay and Anderson. He was not a person to mince words or to try to gloss over the realities. He was a tough individual, and I think that rubbed the military the wrong way. But he did not consciously set out to hurt people or to expose raw nerves. He is really a very compassionate man by nature."

Re: General LeMay

pp. 45-46

RLG: "General LeMay was a military commander who believed that unless you had on a uniform, you could not make decisions involving military matters. He was very strong-minded, very difficult to reason with, partly because of his hardness of hearing, but not, in my opinion, a modern day military leader."